of July 7 we were concealed in a dense wood between a place called Lowndes-ville and the border of the Anderson dis-

trict, about three miles from the Savan-

nah river. We had been traveling hard

for there were plenty of "birds" in that

section. We had not yet dropped off to

the tramping and snorting of horses,

and looking out through the chinks of

the cabin we saw six well mounted, well

armed men approaching. They came

directly to the cabin, as if sure that the

parties they were in search of were se-

creted there. Reming in, one of the

men halted before the opening, and with

his carbine thrown into the hollow of

I came to the opening, and, with as

much boldness as I could assume, I asked

"We want all you fellows to come out

Bell came to my side, and together we

"There's more in there!" persisted the

man, who appeared to be in command.

which he at once proceeded to do.

We invited him to search for himself

CHAPTER VL

WE ARE CAPTURED BY THE HOME GUARD.

WHO BELIEVE US TO BE HORSE THIEVES.

The fact that the horsemen searched

the cabin convinced Bell and myself that

we were not the men they were looking

for, but this assurance did not make the

prospect look brighter. Our situation

and appearance were not in our favor

and that our captors were not prepos-

sessed was evident from their oaths and

scowling faces. Before our escape from

Millen we decided on the story we

should tell once we got away and stick

to it without any variation. This we

had done except in the case of the ne-

groes who had befriended us, so that

now we were ready to confront any of

the white men with whom we had spoken

to prove that we had been persistently

consistent in our statements. It was not

our policy to volunteer information, but

we were not slow to resent in a spirited

way any attempt to treat us with in-

result of any agreement, Bell always told

his story first, and after he had worked

his bridle arm be shouted:

the man what he wanted.

and surrender," he said

stepped out.

"Hello, in there!"

sleep when we were startled by hearing

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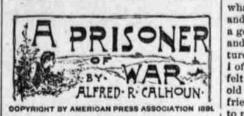
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our journey, keeping in the side roads to the left, which we knew would lead us toward the Savannah river, and with that for a guide we reasoned that we could not go far astray We passed a number of ruined cabins and worn out fields, but the country appeared to be deserted, for till about noon we saw no sign of life. In going through a stretch of pines we suddenly came upon a group of barelegged, towheaded children play ing beside a brook, and at sight of us they stood stock still and gazed at us with curiosity and awe in their eyes, as I have seen mountain antelope look when confronted by a sudden danger. The eldest was a girl of about twelve, and I vividly recall that, though evidently frightened herself, she drew the other children about her and shielded them with her sunbrowned arms in a way that was very touching.

"Sis," said Bell in a kindly tone that seemed very natural, though since our meeting in the Charleston poorhouse it had not been habitual with him, "we uns is friends. You uns mustn't feel

"We ain't skeert," said the girl, and she drew a long breath. "We uns is soldiers," continued Bell. 'Is your dad a soldier?"

"He was," said the girl. "Ain't he now?" She shook her head and compress

"Why not?" asked Bell. "Kaze why?"

"Kaze he's dead!" she gasped.

"That's doggone bad; but then lots and lots of soldiers is dead, and lots and lots moah is goin to peg out afoah the trouble is over. We uns, as you see har, sis, is most nigh dead, but we uns don't intend to go clar out till we uns ken reach the wives and babies awaitin us up in the mountains."

Bell and I were both single, but as his purpose was naturally to ingratiate him self with the child I remained quiet. She told us that the nearest town was Allen dale, and that we were now in the Barnwell district. How far Allendale was she did not know, but she "reekoned it was a right smart distance," and this vague reply we often received from older and more intelligent people.

On others matters the girl was much more positive. She was certain that her name was "Min Long," and that she and her mother and brothers and sisters lived with her Grandfather Dillard "over by the harrican." We subsequently found that this "harrican" was a stretch of country about a mile back from the river where a hurricane some years be fore had cut down a swath of timber about half a mile in width and miles in length as completely as if it had been leveled by a mighty scythe.

Bell sought to confirm himself in the child's good graces by assuring her that, although we were barefoot and didn't have our best clothes along, we really had lots of money, and to prove the latter statement be pulled out the wad of Confederate money he had won on the island and gave a bill to each of the children. On the instant their timidity vanished, and they cheerfully consented to pilot us to their home "over by the harrican," and as they were sure that their grandfather and one hand were the only men on the place we thought it quite prudent to go with them.

About a mile further on we came upon a double log cabin on stilts that left a space underneath for a swarm of yellow curs and a lot of disconsolate looking chickens. As we neared the house the children ran ahead, and when we halted before the steps leading up to the open space between the two cabins the little ones were showing their money to a yellow faced, hollow eyed woman whose faded calico dress appeared to be her only garment, and who held-cigar fashion-between her thin lips a willow stick, which told at a glance that she was addicted to the habit of snuff dip-

"Howdee, strangers?" was the wom an's salutation as Bell and I doffed our hats and stood before her.

Bell said that he was feeling very well excepting that he was a little damp and hungry and that if the lady would get us something to eat and permit us to dry our clothes before going on that he would gladly pay her her own price, as he-cared far more for the accommodation than he did for the money

"Come in and I'll send for dad," replied the woman.

We followed her in, and the oldest girl was sent for her grandfather. That gentleman must have been within easy reach, for Bell and I had hardly taken our seats by the fire when Mr. Dillard, the owner of the place and the father of the woman, came in. He wore no shoes. A ragged straw hat, and a pair of butternut trousers, held up by a single sus-pender that had left a blue stain on his unbleached and unwashed cotton shirt. constituted his simple attire. His hair and beard were shaggy and gray, and his long, leathery cheeks and bony cinnamon colored hands gave him the appearance of an Indian. He was very distant at first. He knew nothing about the war and did not want to know, except

that a "passel of doggone hounds kem to his house more'n two years ago and toted Jack Long, his son-in-law, off to de wah." He didn't bring on the war and he wasn't going to fight "unless they came to tote him off; then he would show his hand," and he motioned to the long hunting rifle

and powder horn above the dresser Bell understood the old man perfectly. Their vernacular was nearly the same. D P. A. Louisville, Ky and they were soon agreeing on every point. Bell had been conscripted like Mr. Dillard's son, and I had been conscripted and fairly dragged away from my old mother, whose only support I was. Now we had "lit out," and we were trying to make our way home to our friends in the mountains, for we were determined to take no further part in and a pore man's fight." Bell really had a genius for stock fiction of this kind, and he was so intensely earnest and profriended us, particularly as we were able to pay, but having begun with one story it was necessary to stick to it.

With the old man's help the woman soon had a dinner of corn bread, bacon and milk ready, and we complimented the cooking by a display of appetite that seemed to alarm the group of children looking on Bell paid in advance, and when Mr. Dillard suggested that we rest till next day and said that he would cobble our boots for us, we readily agreed

He made us up a bed in the adjoining section of the cabin, and, as Bell felt absolutely sure that we could trust the old man, I lay down with my clothes off and the feeling that, next to the food that satisfies a burning hunger, there is nothing quite like a bed that banishes fa-

"I reckon you mout as well have some breakfast; then if so be youd like to go on and sleep some more, you ken do so for it's still a-rainin." This is some thing like the salutation with which Mr Dillard woke us up the next morning. and without which, I am very sure, we should have rounded out our twenty-four bours of what Bill called "downright sol'd old sleepin."

The breakfast was much like the dinner of the day before, except that our bacon was boiled with some sort of greens that to me was very palatable. Mr. Dillard told us that he was going to Allendale that day, and he advised us to hang around till the following morning. saying that in the meantime he would consult with some friends who could be trusted and see if a plan could not be hit on that would further our venture and prevent our leading the wretched vagrant existence of the present.

Feeling the necessity of having papers about us that would look and read like furloughs, I commissioned Mr. Dillard to buy me some pens, ink and paper, for he had no such articles about his house, and also to get me if possible some kind of a citizen's coat. Bell gave him the money and then returned to bed, while I went off to the woods with the children.

These little ones knew nothing about books, and were entirely ignorant of the fairy stories on which the children of civilization are brought up. They had an idea that Yankees were fierce, cruel animals from which they would run on sight, for they had killed their father. Their ideas of religion were vague and would horrify an orthodox Sunday school. They firmly believed in ghosts. and Min, the girl, assured me, with much sincerity in her voice and awe in her big gray eyes, that one night, when she was searching for a lost cow in the "harrican," she saw two ghosts, and "they looked just like Yankees or devils." She was very sure that in the heart of the swamp there lived a rabbit "a dignity. heap sight bigger'n a hoss, an he don't never come out, 'cept when some one's gwine to die. El it's a old pusson he crawls kinder slow, an ef it's a young one he skips round powahful lively, an wouldn't think nothin of jumpin clas

ovah de harrican." Min further informed me that she was "goin to git married" when she was "nigh bont sixteen, ef so be the Yankees don't kill off all the men." And she seemed quite comforted when I told her that I had no wife, and that I might come down to see her again when I got my best clothes and she was "nigh bont sixteen." Since that time I have played with the children of the Navajoes, Utes and Mojaves in their own villages, and I found them quite as enlightened as these interesting little white savages of the South Carolina pine lands.

Late in the afternoon Mr. Dillard returned, bringing writing materials and also a butternut coat, which, in addition to being several sizes too large, had seen service before. That night two men who looked enough like Mr. Dillard to be his twin brothers, came to the house, and we found them like our host very much down on the Yankees, and still more bitterly opposed to the war and the men who brought it on. They had vague stories about great battles in Georgia and Virginia, and a man over at Allendale had told Mr. Dillard that Lincoln was killed. This information was thought to be reliable, as the man who told it had seen it "with his own evest in a Columbia paper.

One of these men was decidedly origfnal in his way, and he gave us an idea which we subsequently carried out to our great advantage. He seemed to have a particular hatred for the men who had been exempted from army duty because of their negroes.

"Ef so be," he said, as near as I can recall, "I was a makin fo' the Blue Ridge, I wouldn't go neah no large towns like 'Gusta, fo' them's chuck full of fellers playin sojers. I'd stick to the country. I'd find out what plantations had the best hosses or mules, an as I prefer to ride rather than to walk, I'd do as most sojers do, an that is take a critter when I wanted one. Of course it wouldn't be wise to hang on to the same

critters, but change off every chance." This man was regarded by his friends as a great traveler. He had been down the river to Savannah, and he had also made a trip in his younger days "way out to Pickens," which was the extreme northwestern corner of the state. We talked far into the night, and the next morning Bell and myself, in excellent health and spirits, bade farewell to Mr. Dillard and his interesting family.

We had a rude map of the roads leading to Aiken, and we were assured by Mr. Dillard and his friends that if we kept on the tracks indicated and did not put up at the larger plantations that we might trust the poor whites, "fo' they was our own kind of folks." This advice was certainly good, and acting on it we passed through Aiken, Edgefield and into the Abbeville district. We met many deserters on the way, and the men with whom we spoke were all convinced that the south was whipped. If the de-moralization and desertions were as great in other parts of the south, and I am inclined to think they were, it is certain that the southern men hastened the

himself into a high pitch of indignation and become reckless in his profanity and eager to fight any number of men in any way they chose, "but not mor'n two at a time," I assumed a lofty manner and used my finest language-the latter I four I was always potent with even southern men of education. The leader of the gang of horsemen was a loud voiced bully, and that his military record was confined to the home guard was evident at a glance. With a loud

direction of his pistol he addressed Bell, perhaps becouse he was the older and the stronger looking. "Well, you d-d horse thief! You infernal cowardly deserter, we got you and this boy; now if you don't tell us whar the rest of the gang is, by -, we'll take our halters and swing you two fellows up right here!"

oath and a threatening gesture in the

To prove that he meant business, the man-his name was Holland-flung himself from the saddle, and the others fol lowed his example. Bell did not quail; indeed, there was that in his manner that alarmed the horsemen. He strode to ward Holland and, looking him full in the eyes, prefaced his introductory speech by informing the fellow that if he dared to intimate that either of us was a horse thief he lied like a sneak and the truth was not in him, and, further, that if he (Holland) was not the biggest coward that ever wore a beard he would either apologize or else give the man he had so grossly insulted an equal chance to prove his honor and his courage. This bold course had an excellent effect, and Bell was quick to see it. Turning to the other men, with a manner that indicated he was sorry to see a lot of fine fellows in

such company as Holland's, he said: "We uns is sojers on furlough a-tryin to make our way to the mountains. We uns hez been whar the man that dares to insult we uns never was and never will be, and that's whar Yankee bullets hez been flyin around. Just look at that!" With a dramatic intensity and a force of action such as I have never seen surpassed on the stage, Bell tore open his shirt and pointed to the still unhealed bullet note in his right breast. It had been made by

rebel, but who could tell that? Holland calmed down somewhat though he was not inclined to yield gracefully. He and his men were out hunting deserters and horse thieves. They had been tracked into these woods, and while Bell's story might be true, it was the part of prudence to make us prisoners until we could prove that we were honest men and away from the army on

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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turesquely profane in his narrations that I often found myself believing them I for about sixteen hours, and made up our minds to rest before going on. We lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, that must have been used at one time by hunters, the lay down in a deserted cabin, the lay down in a deserted cabin, t

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